



Castle Eaton Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes

11th May 7pm

Castle Eaton Village Hall

1. Chair's Report

This is the end of my fourth year in office. I wish to record my appreciation for the support of my Clerk and fellow Councillors for their inputs.

By now you will know that all five of the current Councillors chose to stand again for a second term.

Given no other residents expressed a wish to stand, the current Councillors are re-elected without need for a ballot, and I thank them all in advance for their sense of civic responsibility, their stamina and their future contributions.

Following the recent electoral boundary changes, Castle Eaton is now in Blunsdon Ward along with Hannington, Hannington Wick and Stanton Fitzwarren. Nick Gardiner has been elected as our Ward Councillor. I congratulate him and look forward to working together.

I wish to express our particular thanks to Steve Weisinger one of our past Ward Councillors for his assistance over the last four years and wish him and Cllr Manro good luck in their new (-ish) roles as Ward Councillors of Highworth Ward.

As we are at the closure of our first 4 years, I wish to summarise our actions on behalf of Castle Eaton and record items rolling over into the next term of office.

COMPLETED ACTIONS LAST 4 YEARS

Anaerobic Digester Expansion;

Withdrawn and no apparent further applications.

CBF

Introduction of official approval document, signed by any 3 Councillors, to avoid misunderstandings.

Playground repaired. Funded by VCC and PC.

Two new water pump heads, one installed one still waiting.

Devolved Services

Abandoned by SBC

Refuse Collections

Standardised across CE.

Drains

Cleaned, but on 3-year cycle. Next clean 2027 or 28.

CONTINUING

Timports

Latton and CEPC joint initiative regarding use of greater storage area than consented, leading to greater than authorised HGV traffic on C114 and A419 junction. Enforcement have been notified.

7.5ton limit

Deliberate repeated usage by overweight HGVs of CE as an illegal short cut has been reported to Wiltshire Police. Only those HGVs witnessed by Officers can be fined. Any resident seeing HGVs in the village invited to send photographs to any Councillor or our Clerk. Note however, some drivers can be aggressive – possibly because they could be fined £300 for each noticed occurrence.

Traffic Initiatives

Unable to generate much interest from SBC. This not only continues but was started before this set of Councillors took office.

The speed sign at the C114 entrance was repaired but is not awfully visible.

Pothole filling and repainting white lines within CE has occurred, but no notice of this was given to CEPC.

CBF

Difficulty that all expenditure must be for the benefit of the whole village, but exclude anything related to politics or religion. Remaining balance £17392.

2nd water pump top still rusting to remove primer. Will be installed when ready on pump opposite church entrance.

ANONYMOUS DOCUMENTS

CEPC will continue to refuse to act on any such inputs.

FINANCE

Precept £20774.

Pays for Clerk, Grass cutting, VH Grant, P.O. and Playing Field

Parish Councillors are unpaid by choice

Bank Balances

CBF £17392

PC £20186 plus Reserve £500

LONG TERM

Lower Burytown Farm

Threat of 4000 new houses on Lower Burytown Farm within next 5-20 years via new Swindon Plan (to 2043). Eventual (15 – 20 years hence) northern exit proposed west of Hannington and south of Lushill, implying increased traffic through CE.

Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) 2025, part of SBC Plan, Section 18 consultation.

3.1 The SHELAA assessed Lower Burytown Farm (481.85ha, ref. S0500) as not suitable, summarising as follows:

3.2 “Vast rural site located outside of current settlement boundary. Site includes areas at risk of flooding, heritage assets, non-designated archaeology and ancient woodland. Development would be on scale with a new town. Scale of development considered inappropriate. Significant concern regarding heritage, landscape, archaeology and ecology”.

3.3 The assessment marked the site ‘Red’ in relation to heritage, landscape, archaeology and ecology with regeneration opportunities and the location rated ‘Amber’.

Knight, Frank response, acting for owners (Barker Family Trust)

3.6 The site is considered available, achievable and deliverable, as demonstrated by the aforementioned, the enclosed Vision Document and associated technical evidence.

3.7 The site’s deliverability is underpinned by its single ownership, phased access, infrastructure capacity, and viability. There are no technical or environmental constraints that would prohibit or considerably delay site delivery.

3.8 Therefore, it is requested that the evidence base, including the SHELAA, is updated in consideration of the enclosed information, and the site considered as an allocation in the draft local plan.

2. Annual reports from each Village Group

Cinema Club

Castle Eaton Community Cinema Club

Report to Castle Eaton Parish Council AGM,

11th May 2026 for the year 2025/26

The Cinema Club started the financial year with a balance of £1888.32 and ended with £1781.58, making a slight loss over the year of £106.74, which is a little disappointing. Last year the average number of filmgoers was 14. We do, however, only need one or two more people to regularly attend and this can be turned around.

Cinema Club is held every other month and has shown diverse films over the year, some requested by people in the village and others which were chosen by Teresa, Dawn and Gill when no suggestions had been received. Films shown this year were:

A Knight’s Tale

Mr Burton

The Amateur

The Man Who Invented Christmas

The Roses

Big Bold Beautiful Journey

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The licence to show a film is expensive at a little under £110 and the Cinema Club also buys the DVD which we then retain and which can be borrowed by villagers who were unable to attend the showing. In order to break even the Cinema Club needs around fifteen people to pay their £4.50 entrance (it's £5 in the surrounding villages) and make a contribution for a couple of glasses of wine each.

We encourage people to stay after the showing to enjoy a further drink (wine or tea/coffee) and chat. This makes it more of a social evening and continues to be well received by everyone.

We welcome villagers' suggestions regarding future films and we will then investigate whether a licence is available, without which we are unable to show a film to a paying audience.

Environmental

Environmental Group Report for PC AGM, May 2026

The main focus of the Environmental Group this year has been the continued care of the flower tubs which are situated by the Lych Gate, the playground, the corner of School Lane and The Street, and outside the Village Hall, by Morag, Helen, Gill, Colin, Graham and Dawn, who keep them planted and watered throughout the year, so huge thanks to them, they have all volunteered to continue for another year.

Thanks also to the Parish Council for help with expenses. We also arranged for the village tree in the Red Lion garden, which commemorates our Best Kept Village win, to be pruned, fed and re-staked.

The group could really do with someone to take a lead in organising a village tidy-up, but if anyone wants to do any litter picking, we can always loan you the equipment.

Gardening Club

Annual Report 2026 of the Castle Eaton Gardening Club

1 May 2026 – prepared by Ruth Wilkins

The club calendar runs October – September.

Executive Summary

- The club costs £ 2050 pa to run. £1 400 of this is speaker fees which have plateaued a little. This also includes investment to some fundraising events, ie printing for calendars and Scarecrow Trail.
- Many fundraising activities are held each year to cover costs of speakers.
- The club continues its charity work through funding the scarecrow trail so that all entry fees and donations can go direct to the chosen charity.
- Giving back to the community, through members funding the growing of plants and donating to the plant, bake & produce sales during the summer, which is open to all residents and beyond. All our talks and activities are open to all village residents and this year we have had several new members from longstanding residents.
- Membership fees will maintain at current costs for 2026/27

- Accounts are stable with a current balance of £2402 as of 30 April 2026, this maintenance is reliant on our fundraising efforts.

The Report

Membership remains consistent at 27

Committee

- Ruth Wilkins – Chair, Treasurer, Club Activity Lead, Programme Coordinator, Scarecrow Trail Leader
- Secretary – Louise Kennington
- Committee Support - Dawn Saunders, Les Wilkins

With additional ad hoc and immense support from Nina Warminger & Ian Wallace with Plant, Bake & Produce Sales

Membership Fees & Benefits

We have managed over the years to keep the membership fees low through robust budget management and strong fundraising events. The current membership fee is £12 per person per year, and we will maintain this fee through 2027.

For this, members can access the following benefits:

- Monthly meetings with fantastic speakers @ the Village Hall, including Refreshments, and a Christmas Social
- Quarterly raffle
- Group membership to RHS with associated discount schemes.
- Group membership to Gardeners World Magazine, larger distribution capability, GW Online, and Premium content.
- Closed group Facebook page with updates, details of forthcoming events, meetings, gardening tips and tricks
- The Great FREE Seed Share: members share unwanted seeds for others to use.
- Annual Garden Visits, or Garden Party held at a member's garden.
- Plant, Bake & Produce Sales throughout the Spring/Summer
- Participation in the Kings Seed Club Scheme offering significant discounts to members.
- And of-course connecting with other members to exchange tips, tricks and have some fun.

Club Activity Calendar:

Our calendar is a full year, with speakers for 6 months of the year, plus Christmas and Summer socials, a Scarecrow Trail we fund and run for local charities. 2026 will not run the Village Flower & Produce Show due to lack of participation vs time and cost of running the show.

All our activities are open to the Village Residents, to create a greater inclusive community spirit. We have residents who visit the talks occasionally for a topic of interest to them and some who also come along to the Garden Visits. The Christmas Social is a member only activity.

2025/26 Calendar included

WEDNESDAY	SPEAKER	TALK/ACTIVITY
15/10/2025	AGM	AGM
19/11/2025	Oliver O'Dell	Aquaponics & Microgreens
12/12/2025	Christmas Social	
21/01/2026	Pip Smith	Drought resilient gardening
18/02/2026	Bill & Elaine Peach	Building a Garden from Scratch
18/03/2026	Jean Vernon	The Secret Lives of Garden Bees
15/04/2026	Pip Smith	Flood Resilient Gardening
20/05/2026	Peter & Bob Biggs	Seasonal Herbs & Perennials
17/08/2026	Scarecrow Trail	Prospect Hospice

Speakers

The cost of speakers has plateaued at circa £200+ and is averaging out at an annual cost of £1 400.00. However, with the Club Plant, Bake & Produce Sales being our biggest fundraiser, and the Club Calendar we are managing to secure some great speakers. Our speakers also travel up to 90 minutes to get to us.

Charity Work

The club continues its charity work through funding the scarecrow trail so that all entry fees and donations can go direct to the chosen charity, and the Christmas Craft & Gift Fair.

In the Community

The club continues their inclusivity of the village community by ensuring our events and activities are open to all residents' participation. To name a few:

- Our members self-fund the bulk of growing of plants from seed, compost, seedlings, and donating to the plant, bake & produce sales which are open to all residents and beyond.
- The Scarecrow Trail brings along with it, a community feel around the village through residents' participation whilst being a great opportunity to raise money for charity, of which residents can nominate charities.

Fundraising

The club has numerous fund-raising activities throughout the year to cover the cost of speakers. These are supported immensely by club members and residents from Castle Eaton and surrounding villages. These are primarily:

- Plant, Bake & Produce Sales – biggest fundraising events.
- Club Calendar, photos taken by the members and CE residents.
- Membership fees
- Raffles
- Coffee Morning fundraisers for the Club

Financials

Our accounts are audited by Nicki Wickes. Our c current financial records as at end April 2026 :

CEGC ACCOUNTS 2025/2026			
01/10/2025	Opening Bank Balance	£	2,778.65
01/10/2025	Opening Petty Cash Balance	£	40.00
	Annual Income	£	880.52
	Annual Outgoings	-£	1,296.43
01/10/2025	Closing Bank Balance	£	2,343.74
01/10/2025	Closing Petty Cash (already accounted for in accounts) c/f to next season	£	59.00

Ladies Club

The Castle Eaton Ladies Club is continuing to have a good selection of activities and speakers in the Village Hall with good attendance from members and non-members who pay £5.00 for coming to any events.

Parochial Church Council

The PCC is finding that fundraising is becoming increasingly difficult with no interest in proposed events. £12k is needed each year to just keep the church open. If this is not raised the church may have to close its doors. Ideas were discussed possible options such as the harvest supper which used to be very popular; however, it is believed that the Village Hall will need a licence to serve hot food. Other ideas included a Jumble trail around the village.

To take a small burden off the church it was suggested that the Parish magazine should become the Village magazine so it could be funded via the CBF account.

The church itself receives donations from the Village Hall library which is open on the last Saturday of each month by residents G Williams and D Saunders, this gives people a chance to donate their finished books as well as take books, DVD's, games and so on. They also sell surplus books to World of Books with all monies raised going specifically to our village church to pay for specific items. So

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far, they have raised over £300 - nearer to £400, they would welcome more support for this from everyone, so do come along and have a browse, we post reminders on the village Facebook site and on the Notice Board.

Keith and Deb Mills have given me a copy of the drawing Kath Asprey did of the village, to sell to raise funds for the VCC. There's a copy hanging in the hall foyer, but several people had never noticed it.

Village Community Committee

The VCC is also finding it challenging to raise funding. This year Playground expenses were £135, luckily fairly low after the upgrade in the previous year. And insurance came in approximately £205.

£222 was raised by Carol Singing, the fete and barn dance were the main fundraising events, however due to the lack of volunteers to run these events, they have not taken place. As with the PCC it is very difficult to find ideas to raise money that appeal to the cross section of the Village, Bingo night appeared to be popular and will be repeated.

Village Hall Trustees

It was Mark Patricks first year as Chair of the Village Hall. He thanked the Village groups for using and supporting the Village Hall with their events. A special thankyou to the organisers and attendees of the Coffee morning every Thursday morning.

Costs of hiring the hall have slightly increased in line with inflation.

Clubs can host a coffee morning to raise funds for themselves with the Gardening club and PCC successfully doing this.

****Move to Parish Council Annual meeting.****

The press and public are cordially invited to attend.